

# Fort Lewis’ female body builder takes it to the nationals

Jensen Gym’s body building instructor headed for stars

**Spc. Erica Leigh Foley**  
Northwest Guardian

The sound of metal on metal, whether it’s from a bench press bar on the stands or two plates on a weight machine, is something commonly heard in gyms around the world — sounds that Arnold Schwarzenegger, Rachel McLish and Cory Everson, all body building superstars, have heard countless times. These same people influenced one of Fort Lewis’ own employees and potential professional body building star, Michelle Burdick, with their power and grace.

From Encino, Calif., Burdick’s dynamic and determined personality takes over, whether it’s on stage or in McVeigh Sports and Fitness Center helping soldiers train and maintain the fighting force on Lewis. Her family, aquatic sports fanatics, introduced her to the active life early. From water and snow skiing to skeet and target shooting Burdick, kept busy and interested in being healthy.

Soon she found herself in Fayetteville, N.C., in a gym working side by side with Soldiers.

Ultimately she found someone who could keep up with her — Chief Warrant Officer Peter Beck with 1st Special Forces Group (Airborne). Physical fitness brought them together.

“As part of courtship we played racquetball, lifted weights, went on 20-mile runs, played volleyball and batted baseballs,” Michelle said. “He needed someone who was as fanatic as himself about staying fit. I

needed someone who could keep up with me. We found each other and have been happily together for seven years now,” she said.

“Although I have been training to stay in shape and sports-ready, I first began training for body building contests at the dare of McVeigh Sports and Fitness Manager Jim Joseph. He dared me to compete in the Emerald Cup 2001. He hooked me up with trainer Debbie Houck.”

Houck currently trains body building pros such as Brenda Raganot and Yolanda Hughes.

“Under her tutelage, I won the Emerald Cup Masters Woman, Miss Fort Lewis, (National Physique Committee) Northern Gold’s Classic and NPC Northwest Regional which qualified me to enter the NPC nationals, where I placed 11th,” she said.

That was her first year in the body building world.

As someone who is bound for international recognition in body building Burdick’s husband said he knows she has what it takes to make it through anything.

This year has been another “Debbie Houck-ified” success. Burdick took sixth at the NPC USA, first overall for three weeks in a row at the NPC Northern Gold’s Classic, NPC Northwest Regional and NPC Evergreen State.

On Oct. 25 she took first overall in women’s and first in mixed doubles in the NPC Washington state.

“I felt comfortable going out there,” Burdick said. “I was more nervous about having my trainer out in the audience than the actual audience.”

Next on her plate she has the NPC Nationals in Miami today and Saturday.

Although being at the top of the physical



Sgt. 1st Class Gary Ogilvie

Michelle Burdick trains for the National Physique Committee Nationals in Miami today and Saturday. She has been competing in body building contests since 2001.

world is extremely competitive, Burdick says there is camaraderie and helping hands behind the curtain from her competitors.

“Because all competitors have endured the same long grueling hours of training, dieting, routine preparation and travel stresses, bonding is positive,” she said. “Supportive friendships with comrades in competition is a given. We assist one another with body paint and oils, make up and hair, posing and pumping up and motivation ... generally whatever we need to do to present our best on stage.”

Burdick has been in gyms training for

more than 20 years and every day learns something new, she said.

“I learn by watching others, sharing with trainers, reading about new advances in sports and fitness training techniques and nutritional information and especially from clients.”

As a fitness specialist at McVeigh, she instructs patrons to use proper form, technique and benefits of exercise.

“I am available for one-on-one personal training, goal setting and planning, workout plans and design, plateau breaking workout plans, nutritional information, body composition analysis, progres-

## Body building techniques

Michelle Burdick also teaches:

● **Body sculpting**  
 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 10 a.m., at Jensen Gym.

Body sculpting is a 60-minute full body resistance class utilizing hand-held free weights. It is designed to build lean muscle mass.

● **Super abs**  
 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 11 a.m., at Jensen Gym.

Super abs is a concentrated 30-minute workout targeting all core muscles, strengthening abdominal, oblique, lower back and lower abdominal muscles.

● **Super Soldier physical training**  
 Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, 6:30 a.m., at Jensen Gym.

This is an intense 60-minute class with weight-resisted strength training, plies metrics, abdominal and push-up conditioning and is designed to give Soldiers strength and coordination skills.

sion tracking, authoring on health and fitness topics and group lectures,” Burdick said.

She gives personal training advice and classes that could easily go for \$100 a session off-post. However she has been training for three years now on Fort Lewis.

“I choose to work on base because Fort Lewis offers our services free of charge,” Burdick said. “I feel my services are so important that anyone, regardless of income needs the information and skills we teach to improve their lifelong health. This gives me the widest range of clients.”

## TIDBITS OF TASTE AND TRAVEL



C. S. Critser

Majestic mountains are among of the many attractions offered to visitors at Yosemite National Park, Calif.

# Yosemite one of California’s best-known treasures

By Sgt. Reeba Critser  
 Northwest Guardian

Among California’s treasures are its national parks. One of its best-known, best-loved parks is Yosemite.

In 1903, President Theodore Roosevelt spent four days in the park. As a result, during his presidency, he helped protect an additional 200 million acres of forest wilderness, five more national parks and 65 wildlife preserves. The park ranges from 2,000 to 13,000 feet above sea level. It also features alpine wilderness, groves of giant sequoias and Yosemite Valley. There are 195 miles of roads and 840 miles of trails in the park.

In its history, Yosemite formed 500 million years ago when the Sierra Nevada region was underwater. Today, weather-

ing and erosion shape the rocks and mountains found in the park, forming the glacier-carved canyon.

Jump in the cool Merced River or catch rainbow trout in its clear green water.

You can also climb up El Capitan and the Cathedral Rocks.

The visitor’s center has exhibits on the valley’s natural and human history, and park rangers are available to answer any questions.

Behind the center is a trail leading through the Indian Village, where cultural history of the Miwok and Paiute tribes is featured.

Glacier Point offers visitors a birds’ eye view of the entire Yosemite Valley from the apex of a 3,200-foot drop. Across the valley is a 2,425-foot drop of Yosemite

Falls. The Mariposa Grove is the largest of three sequoia groves in Yosemite. The towering trees are the largest of all living things and more than a thousand years old. The grove’s “Grizzly Giant” tree is 2,700 years old.

Wildlife is everywhere in the park, from mountain lions and bears to deer and birds. Signs are posted to warn visitors of possible dangers.

During winter, cross-country skiers and snowshoers are encouraged to travel the passes. Badger Pass Ski Area is open for downhill skiing.

Lodging is also available in the area.

*(Editor’s note: Information was obtained from the Yosemite National Park Web site at [www.nationalparkreservations.com/yosemite\\_information](http://www.nationalparkreservations.com/yosemite_information).)*

## Overseas holiday military mail dates

Destination	First class	Priority mail	Parcel airlift	Space available	Parcel post
APO/FPO AE zips 090-099	Dec. 4	Dec. 4	Nov. 26	Nov. 13	Nov. 6
APO/FPO AA zips 340	Dec. 4	Dec. 4	Nov. 26	Nov. 13	Nov. 6
APO/FPO AP zips 962-966	Dec. 4	Dec. 4	Nov. 26	Nov. 13	Nov. 6

## International holiday mail dates

Destination	First class	Air parcel post	Surface
Africa	Dec. 8	Dec. 8	Oct. 16
Asia/Pacific Rim	Dec. 15	Dec. 15	Oct. 30
Australia/New Zealand	Dec. 15	Dec. 15	Oct. 30
Canada	Dec. 15	Dec. 15	Nov. 21
Caribbean	Dec. 15	Dec. 15	Nov. 7
Central/South America	Dec. 8	Dec. 8	Nov. 1
Mexico	Dec. 15	Dec. 15	Nov. 7
Europe	Dec. 15	Dec. 15	Nov. 7
Middle East	Dec. 15	Dec. 15	Oct. 23

## Students

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“What (the students) did in support of us was touching,” said Spc. Christopher Vinnett, Company C, 5th Battalion, 5th Air Defense Artillery Regiment.

“It is great to see that the kids appreciate us and what we do,” he

said.

The audience was reminded that honoring veterans on Veterans Day is not just about remembering those who have served in previous wars; those who are currently deployed must be honored as well.

“Veterans of yesterday and today — we will be remembering you and thinking about you in the days ahead,” said Vice Principal Scott Rich.

## Football

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Johnson continued to show his ability to play both ways by scoring a touchdown of his own, although the Automatics offensive attempt to score a two-point conversion fell short at the one-yard line.

It would take Kenji Dorsey of the Wolf-pack to put some points on the board for his team.

“I’m a rookie out here; this is my first game. I’m just out here to help the team,” Dorsey said.

And help he did when he caught a pass in the end zone from Broman while surrounded by a sea of Automatics’ black jerseys.

Julian Colewell, outside linebacker,

intercepted the extra point attempt and ran it back 95 yards for a two-point safety.

In the final minute of the game, the Wolf-pack would make it all the way to the 50-yard line due to three consecutive penalties on the Automatics: offsides, illegal use of equipment and unsportsmanlike conduct. Still, it wasn’t enough to get them across the goal line, and they lost 22-6.

Broman said even though his team had good teamwork, the loss was heartfelt.

Thomas Jones, wide receiver and linebacker, said the team’s major errors were communication and lack of practice.

“We feel confident on our next game,” Jones said.

The Automatics left the game confident.

“Winning, it feels pretty good, but it’s a given thing with the 2-8 Field Artillery,” Williams said.